

Brown Pelican

Endangered



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Nelson's Checker-mallow
Threatened



WSDOT

Olympic Torrent Salamander
Species of Concern



WDNR

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Background

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and NOAA Fisheries implement the [Endangered Species Act of 1973](#) (ESA). The Division of Listing and Recovery activities are covered under sections 4, 6, and 10 of the ESA. We work to protect species through prelisting and candidate conservation, listing, recovery planning and implementation, and grant programs, as well as through conservation activities under the [Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972](#).

Who We Are

The Division of Listing and Recovery is a diverse group of fish and wildlife biologists and ecologists, having broad experience and expertise, who specialize in the conservation of threatened and endangered species and marine mammals.

Who We Serve

- Private citizens
- Federal agencies
- States
- Local governments
- Tribes
- Nongovernmental organizations
- Environmental groups
- Other public interest groups
- Other FWS divisions
- National Fish Hatcheries
- National Wildlife Refuges

What We Do

- Participate in prelisting conservation of candidate species and species of concern.
- Add plant and animal species to, and remove species from, the lists of threatened and endangered species.
- Develop recovery plans and implement recovery tasks.
- Coordinate grants to State agencies and their partners.
- Participate in marine mammal protection, particularly northern sea otters.
- Provide technical assistance to other divisions in our office, other agencies, and the public.
- Participate in 5-year reviews of listed species.

Prelisting

Species of concern are those species we believe may have population or habitat conservation issues, and potential threats, that could eventually lead to the need to list. Each office maintains an informal list of these species to "keep eye on"; obtain more information about; advise other agencies, organizations, and individuals about our concerns; and to consider for the candidate assessment process described below.

Whulge (Taylor's or Edith's)
Checkerspot Butterfly
Candidate



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Oregon Spotted Frog
Candidate



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Western Gray Squirrel
Recent Petition Findings



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Candidate species are species we have determined may warrant listing and for which we have sufficient information to initiate the listing process when funding is available. Candidate species and species of concern have no official protection under the ESA. However, we work with other divisions in our office and various agencies, nongovernmental and environmental organizations, and others to design and complete conservation actions that may prevent a future listing. For example, cooperative surveys for the Mardon skipper butterfly, a candidate species, have identified a number of new populations.

Listing

We add species to the lists of threatened and endangered species by one of two processes: (1) **candidate assessment** or (2) **petition**.

Through the **candidate assessment process**, we evaluate the status of a species to determine if the species warrants listing and whether we have sufficient information to list. If so, we add the species to the candidate list by preparing a Species Assessment and Listing Priority Assignment Form, which assigns the species a [listing priority](#)

[number](#). We update these forms and publish a [list of candidates](#) annually in the Federal Register. The most recent additions of western Washington species to the candidate list through the candidate assessment process include two butterflies (the mardon skipper and Whulge (Taylor's or Edith's) checkerspot), Mazama pocket gophers, and the streaked horned lark.

The [petition process](#) allows private citizens or organizations to submit petitions to list species they believe to be threatened or endangered. We assess the species' status based on information provided in the petition and additional information in our files, as well as contacts with State wildlife agencies and tribes. We publish the results of this assessment in the [Federal Register](#) as a 90-day petition finding. If we have substantial information that listing may be warranted, we begin a thorough status review of the species. We request additional data and information from the public, academics, other governmental agencies, tribes, and environmental organizations. We publish the results of the status review and whether the species warrants listing in a 12-month petition finding in the *Federal Register*. One

example is the recent addition of the West Coast DPS of the Pacific fisher to the candidate list through the petition process.

A **proposed rule** to list the species may accompany a 12-month finding that listing is warranted. However, if funding is not available to complete the rulemaking process, or other species have higher listing priorities, we add the species to the candidate list for future listing as funding becomes available.

We propose species for listing from the candidate list based on listing priority numbers and availability of funding. The proposed rule summarizes what we know about the biology and status of the species, discusses the known threats to the species, and explains why we believe the species may warrant listing as threatened or endangered. In the proposed rule we solicit additional data and information from interested parties. The **final rule** may add the species to the lists of threatened and endangered species, or we may withdraw the species from consideration for listing based on any additional data and information obtained during the rulemaking process. Listed species are assigned a [recovery priority number](#).

Critical habitat includes specific geographic areas that are essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species. We designate areas having the physical or biological habitat features needed for life and successful reproduction of the species. Critical habitat may be designated for a species at the time of listing or may be designated in a separate rulemaking process. Most recently we designated critical habitat for bull trout in the Columbia River distinct population segment and are preparing proposed critical habitat for the Coastal/Puget Sound distinct population segment.

We can also change the status of a listed species from threatened to endangered (uplisting) or from endangered to threatened (downlisting). We can [delist](#) a species if it has recovered, if the initial listing was in error based on new data and information, or if the species has become extinct. Species may also be delisted through the petition process. The procedures for uplisting, downlisting, and delisting are the same as for listing a species, including publication of a proposed rule, request for public comment and additional information, and publication of a final rule. For example, the FWS

delisted the [American peregrine falcon](#) in 1999.

Our office maintains a comprehensive [western Washington list](#) and individual [county lists](#) of threatened and endangered species, candidate species, and species of concern. The FWS maintains a list, which is updated daily, of [all listed species](#). This list provides species' regulatory profiles, including *Federal Register* documents and life history information. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains a State list of animal species of concern including threatened and endangered species [listed by the State of Washington](#). The [Natural Heritage Program](#) provides information on the status of plant species.

The status of listed species may be reviewed every 5 years. We have recently participated in 5-year status reviews for the bull trout, [northern spotted owl](#), and marbled murrelet.

Recovery Planning

For a listed species, or occasionally for a group of listed species occupying similar habitats or locations, we may establish a recovery team to develop a recovery plan. Other recovery plans are prepared by FWS

Peregrine Falcon
Delisted August 25, 1999



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Northern Spotted Owl
Threatened
5-Year Status Review



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Marbled Murrelet
Threatened
5-year Status Review



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biologists or a species' expert. A recovery plan identifies goals and objectives for recovery and outlines recovery tasks that, when implemented, should lead to the species' recovery. Initially, a draft recovery plan is prepared and made available for public review and comment. A final recovery plan is completed incorporating additional data, information, and comments.

We work across state boundaries to coordinate recovery planning and implementation with other FWS offices for a number of federally listed (e.g., bull trout) and candidate species (e.g., streaked horned lark) that are found in both Washington and Oregon. Recently completed recovery plans include draft recovery plans for two bull trout distinct population segments.

A [recovery program fact sheet](#) and copies of [draft and final recovery plans](#) are available on the FWS website.

Recovery Implementation

The recovery plan provides guidelines for actions needed to protect and recover a species. The implementation schedule in a recovery plan identifies the agencies, organizations, and cooperators having the

capability, authority, or responsibility for carrying out each task. However, identified parties are not obligated to undertake specific tasks. The implementation schedule prioritizes recovery tasks and provides the basis for securing funding for recovery.

The FWS coordinates and participates in completing many recovery tasks. For example, we are participating in a 4-year project with Willapa National Wildlife Refuge to establish new populations of Columbian white-tailed deer, an endangered species, on islands in the Columbia River. Each year approximately 60 deer are translocated from the mainland of Washington and Oregon to islands within the species' historical range. Movements, survival, and health of these translocated animals are monitored for 2 years. The data are used to refine procedures for establishing additional subpopulations to expand the species' range, increase the population size, reduce the risk of extinction, and increase the likelihood of Columbian white-tailed deer recovery. Other listed species recently receiving considerable recovery funding include the bull trout and golden paintbrush.

Columbian White-tailed Deer
Endangered



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Columbian White-tailed Deer
Translocations



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Bull Trout



We actively participate in the Shared Salmon Strategy, a multi-agency effort to address the needs of native fish in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. Salmon and bull trout share many habitat requirements. Consequently, efforts to conserve and protect one species can benefit the other.

Coordination of protection, including land acquisition, restoration, and enhancement efforts among agencies and organizations increases effectiveness while reducing costs.

We may also promote the protection and recovery of threatened species by developing special regulations (section 4(d) of the ESA). These regulations provide safeguards for protecting and enhancing habitat for the threatened species while allowing agencies and the public to carry out various locally regulated activities.

Recovery Permits

We provide protection for listed species by issuing [recovery permits](#) (under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA) for research activities and habitat restoration projects. Each recovery permit includes specific terms and conditions to ensure activities will

contribute to the recovery, and not harm, the species being studied or that may be affected by habitat restoration projects. This permitting process allows State, Federal, environmental organizations, and individuals complete research projects on federally listed species. These research projects provide new data and information that will enhance the survival and contribute to the long-term recovery of listed species.

Grant Programs

The FWS administers a variety of [natural resource grants](#). Our office provides funding through a number of these [grant programs](#). The Division of Listing and Recovery coordinates four [Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund grant programs](#), authorized by [section 6](#) of the ESA. These programs provide grants to States and Territories and their partners for conservation projects benefiting federally listed threatened or endangered, proposed, or candidate species, or other species of concern.

Conservation Grants provide funding to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Natural Resources and their partners to carry out activities

contributing to the recovery of listed species. Using Conservation Grants, the State has implemented multi-year recovery projects for grizzly bears, western snowy plovers, marbled murrelets, and a number of plant species.

Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants support planning and development of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) that will benefit listed, proposed, and candidate species and other species of concern.

HCP Land Acquisition Grants fund acquisition of lands that complement conservation already provided on HCP-managed lands.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants fund acquisition of habitat to support recovery of listed species.

In 2004 Washington received \$2.4 million for HCP planning and development

and more than \$13 million for land acquisition to conserve habitat. Since 2001 nearly \$56 million in conservation grant funds have been awarded to this state through these three grant programs. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has [additional information](#) on these grant programs.

Marine Mammals

Under provisions of the [Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972](#), and in partnership with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, we work to preserve and protect Washington's northern sea otter population. The native sea otter population was extirpated in the early 1900s. The current population was established with 59 northern sea otters that were brought to Washington from Alaska in 1969 and 1970. Most of this population is found along the northwestern coast between Neah Bay and Point Grenville.

We conduct joint surveys and research projects to determine numbers, distribution, and condition and health of Washington's northern sea otter population. We are developing a coordinated program to report strandings and respond to other sea otter issues, such as investigating the causes of sea otter mortalities.

We are also helping develop guidelines for managing sea otters that occasionally swim up freshwater streams, interact with people, approach recreational vehicles, or exhibit other unusual behaviors that could harm sea otters or humans.

Although Washington's northern sea otter population is not listed under the Endangered Species Act, the species is listed as State Endangered. Additional information, including a draft recovery plan, are on the [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's web site](#).

Northern Sea Otter
Species of Concern



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